Chatsworth Road Baptist Church, West Norwood.

A BRIEF HISTORY of the TWENTY-FIVE YEARS: 1878-1903.

Chatsworth Road Baptist Church, West Norwood.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS: 1878-1903.

Motto for 1904.

"My Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not."

—*Haggai ii. 5.*

Prayer.

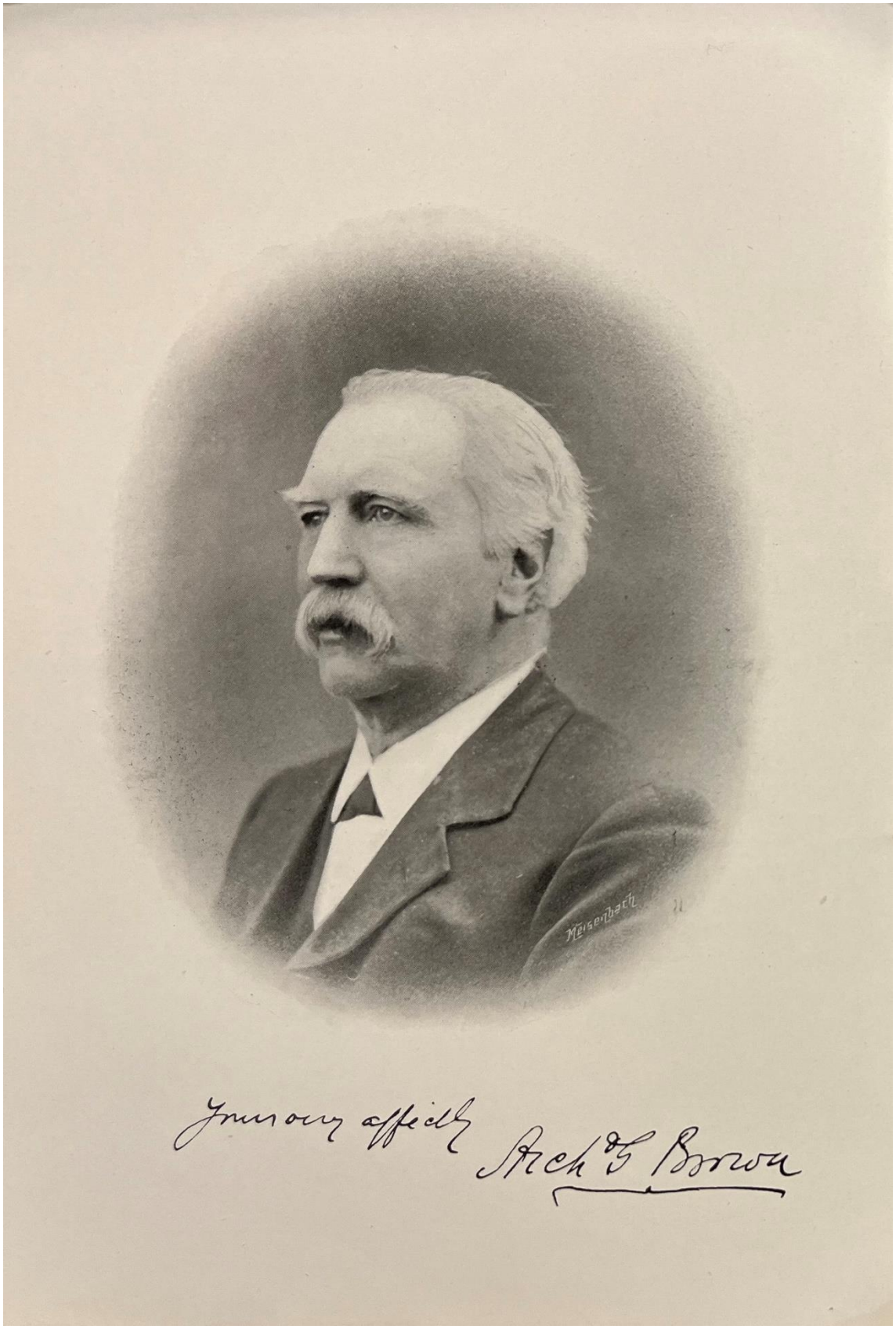
May we as a Church manifest the possession of this one grand essential.

Chatworth Road (now Chatsworth Way) Baptist Church, West Norwood
A Brief History of the Twenty-Five Years: 1878-1903

CHATSWORTH ROAD BAPTIST CHAPEL.

To the Glory of God

And in Gratitude to Him for
Blessing received
during a Quarter of a Century:
this Brief History of the
Chatsworth Road Baptist Church,
West Norwood,
has been Compiled by its Secretary,
Thomas A. Curtis.


Meisenbach
Yours very affectly
Richd G Brown

Chatsworth Road Baptist Church,

West Norwood.

THE complete freeing of the Baptist Chapel, Chatsworth Road, West Norwood, from all debt, notwithstanding the various additions and alterations which have been made recently, suggests the present time as opportune for giving some particulars of the history of this Church.

The erection of the Chapel was due to the efforts of the London Baptist Association in general and to the Rev. J. T. Wigner, the President in 1876, in particular. Early in that year some friends in Lower Norwood—as it was then called—were led to express a strong desire that a Baptist cause should be established among them, and Mr. Thomas Spurrier wrote to ask the assistance of Mr. Wigner. The London Baptist Association voted £1,000 towards the building, and afterwards contributed a further £200. The plot of ground on which the Chapel stands was secured at a cost of £500. By a curious coincidence the credit for securing so admirable a site must be given to Pastor Archibald G. Brown. The building was begun on the 20th October, 1876, and the corner stone was laid on the 21st November of that year by the Rev. J. T. Wigner, who also placed £50 upon it. Other offerings were presented, and the money given or promised during the day amounted to about £300.

The cost of the Chapel, including the site, and the small Lecture Hall which then stood in the rear, was about £6,000, which amount, by the addition of galleries and the erection of the boundary walls, was increased to £7,400. Contributions towards this sum included £500 from one friend, and from another £1,313 specially given for the gallery and boundary walls, and neither of the donors would disclose his or her identity.

The property is freehold, and is vested in trust for the Baptist Denomination. From the beginning the Church has been a Baptist one, as the following rule, adopted in 1878, indicates:—

> That recognising the essential unity of all true believers in Christ, this Church opens its Communion most fully to all who love the Lord Jesus, and extends to them all the rights of membership, at the same time retaining its distinctive character as a Baptist community, holding the immersion of believers to be the only scriptural baptism.

It may be remarked that from the first there has been a continuity of doctrinal teaching.

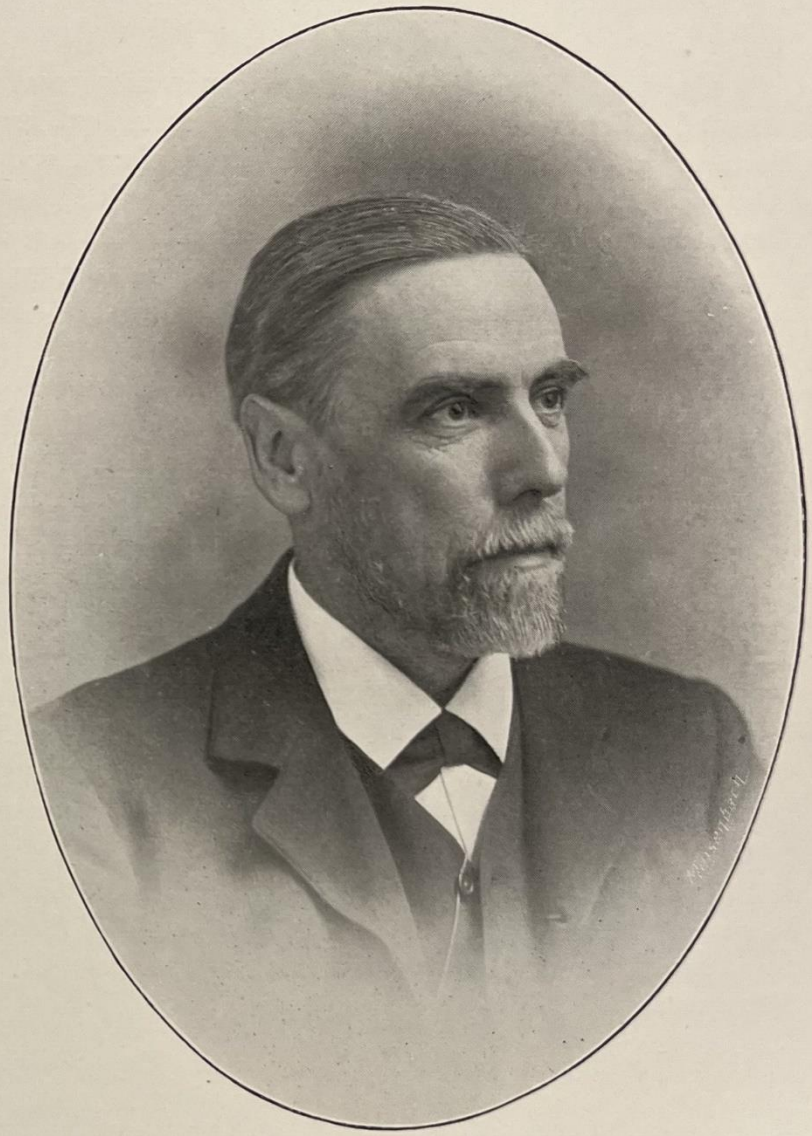
The original Trustees were Messrs. C. H. Goode, G. M. Hammer, W. Higgs, James Joyce, J. B. Mead, Thomas Spurrier, W. G. Thomas, T. B. Willoughby, W. N. Willoughby, J. N. Wigner, B.A., and the Rev. D. Jones, B.A.

The present Trustees are Messrs. G. M. Hammer, W. G. Thomas, W. N. Willoughby, J. N. Wigner, B.A., William Fox, Augustus Smith, and W. H. Truslove.

Of the last appointments the following are no longer living:—Messrs. S. R. Austin, A. S. Macdiarmid, W. R. Thomas, and J. B. Mead.

The Chapel was opened for divine worship on Tuesday, Dec. 11, 1877. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon had been announced to preach, and a crowded congregation assembled, but a few hours previously Mr. Spurgeon was seized with severe illness, and his place was taken by the Rev. J. T. Wigner. A public meeting was held in the

evening, when Mr. James Stiff presided, and addresses were delivered by the Rev. D. Jones, B.A., of Brixton,



Rev. W. Fuller Gooch.

the Rev. T. Vincent Tymms, D.D., now of Leeds, and by Messrs. C. H. Goode, W. Olney, and His Honour Judge Willis, K.C.

On the following Sunday, Pastor Archibald G. Brown, the President of the London Baptist Association for 1877, preached in the morning, and the Rev. D. Jones in the evening.

At the beginning of 1878, Mr. Wigner was greatly concerned about obtaining a suitable minister, and ultimately he wrote to the Rev. William Fuller Gooch, of Falmouth, whom he had known from childhood, to occupy the pulpit for a Sunday or two. Mr. Gooch acceded to the request. He was then unanimously urged to become the minister of the Church, and, after much prayer for divine guidance, and consultation with many honoured brethren, he accepted the invitation, and commenced his ministry on March 24, 1878. His ministry was attended with much blessing, and the congregation steadily increased. When the first Annual Meeting was held on January 3, 1879, the membership had been increased by forty-five members, the total membership being eighty-two, and in the next year thirty-one were added. At this time, it must be borne in mind, the position of the Chapel was too isolated to admit of rapid numerical increase, and the heavy debt, and its annual burden of interest, pressed heavily upon the Church.

While the galleries were being placed in the Chapel and the fencing done, the services were conducted in the Norwood Institute, Knight's Hill. At the re-opening of the Chapel, the sermon was preached by the late C. H. Spurgeon.

Mr. Gooch resigned the Pastorate in 1885, going in August to Sunderland for some months, but he returned to Chatsworth Road again in April, 1886. He finally resigned the Pastorate, much to the regret of the Church, in March, 1892. By this time the debt on the Chapel had been removed.

The Rev. James L. Stanley succeeded Mr. Gooch as

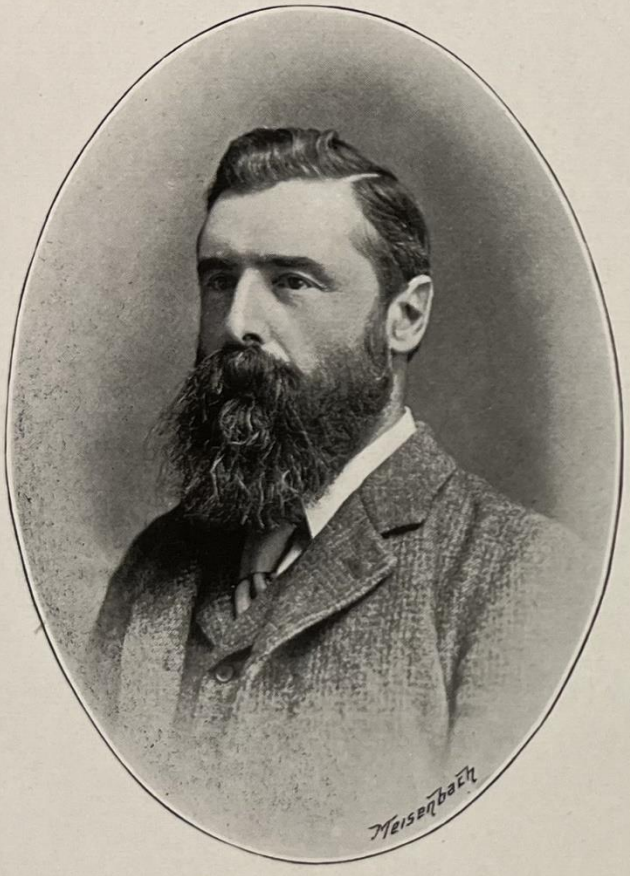
minister on June 13, 1892. An estimable and true-hearted servant of Christ, Mr. Stanley remained for five years in West Norwood, concluding his pastorate in July, 1897. He is now doing very useful work in connection

REV. JAMES L. STANLEY.

with the great Orphan Homes at Bristol, founded by the late Mr. George Müller.

The present Pastor, Mr. Archibald G. Brown, received his first religious impressions at a meeting held at Wood

Lodge, Streatham, conducted by Sir Arthur Blackwood. Mr. Brown was eighteen when he entered on his first pastorate at Bromley, in Kent, and from Bromley he went to Stepney Tabernacle in 1867; shortly afterwards the East London Tabernacle was built, and most people know of the great work that was carried on in East London for exactly thirty years. Finally Mr. Brown was

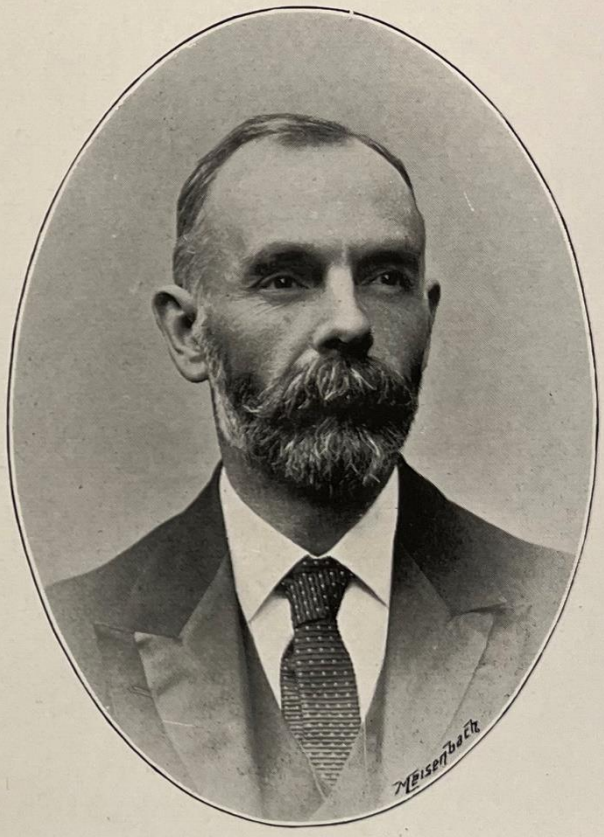


Mr. G. W. Neale.

compelled to take rest, but he accepted a unanimous invitation from Chatsworth Road Church on Sept. 24, 1897, and commenced his new ministry in the November following. His migration to West Norwood was hailed with delight—not only by the Church at Chatsworth Road, but by all the neighbouring ministers and

the Baptist Church at large. Mr. Brown entered upon his new sphere of work under no little difficulties, but since he became the Pastor upwards of eight hundred members have been added to the Church.

With reference to the new Hall and Class-rooms at the Chapel, those who have been longest connected with the



Mr. T. A. Curtis.

Church know that for many years, dating back to Mr. Gooch's ministry, legal difficulties existed which blocked the way to the erection of a larger lecture hall. Various plans were from time to time prepared, but all efforts to get them passed failed, the chief reason for this being that one of the covenants of the deed stipulated that the building was not to be used as a school. In the year 1889 a

fresh effort was made, which ended in all hindrances being removed.

The London County Council condemned the small Lecture Hall and Vestry which formerly existed at the rear of the Chapel, owing to the structure giving way, and it had to be demolished. The inadequacy of the Hall had been apparent for many years, and the accommodation

Mr. J. T. Anger.

for scholars on Sundays could not be extended. Only four days before the old buildings were condemned the plans were approved, and permission received to proceed with new buildings. The architect was Mr. Restler W. Moore, of Bexhill-on-Sea, and the building was entrusted to Messrs. Higgs & Hill, of Lambeth. The total cost was £6,000, including the furnishing and lighting.

On April 25, 1900, eight Memorial Stones were laid in Chatsworth Hall, four on each side, bearing the inscriptions which appear on pp. 30 and 32.

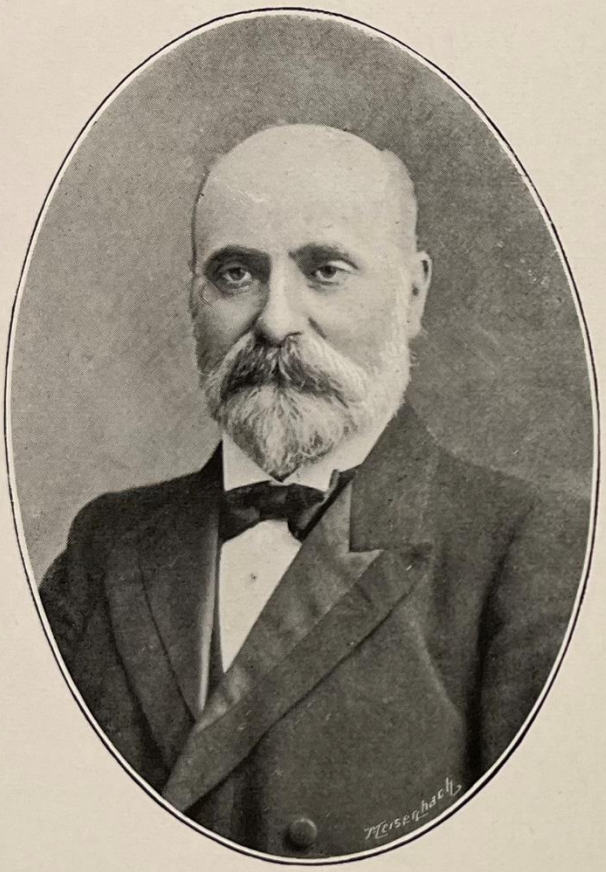
The total amount which was placed on the stones amounted to £1,300, including Mr. John Pearce's gift of £1,000, which he afterwards greatly augmented. Of the

Mr. R. Barber.

remaining amount required, £2,000 was collected by the Pastor from his personal friends, and members of the Church and Congregation.

The new building, which was opened on October 8, 1900, consists of two floors, the upper floor containing a large hall, 75 feet by 34 feet 6 inches, with two class-rooms, etc., seating some 450 persons. Access is

obtained by two stone staircases (the steps of which originally formed part of the Metropolitan Tabernacle destroyed by fire on April 20, 1898) with separate entrances, and also from the galleries of the Church. The ground floor consists of a smaller hall, 44 feet 6 inches by 34 feet 6 inches, seating some 250 persons ; ladies' vestry, 21 feet by 14 feet ; minister's vestry, 17 feet by 12 feet ;



Mr. Augustus Smith.

deacon's vestry, 13 feet 6 inches by 12 feet ; and kitchen, with range, copper, etc., with the heating apparatus for the Church in a chamber below. There are frontages in Chatsworth and Idmiston Roads, and the walls are faced with red brick, the windows being glazed with amber glass in lead lights, with Bath stone tracery and jambs,

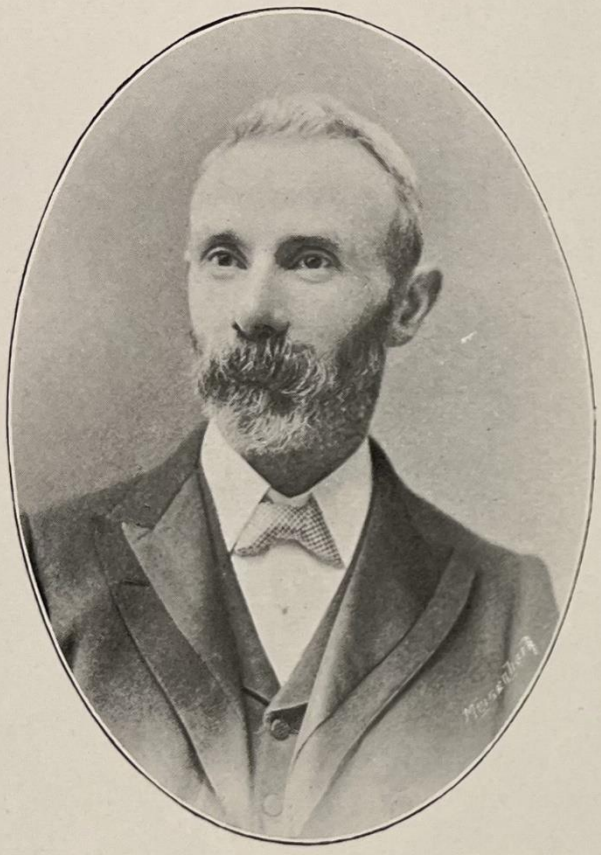
etc. The Chapel and new buildings have been fitted with the electric light.

A new rostrum, the gift of Mr. Donald Campbell, has taken the place of the pulpit in the Chapel. It consists of a large circular-fronted platform with a staircase on both sides from the lower platform, and access also from the side galleries.

Mr. P. Weare.

A Sunday School is naturally one of the Church's earliest auxiliary institutions. The School was formed on Sunday, July 14, 1878. It met for the first time on the following Sunday with forty scholars, and sixteen teachers enrolled on the register. Unfortunately, little, if any, provision for suitable accommodation could be made when the Chapel was built, and as early as April,

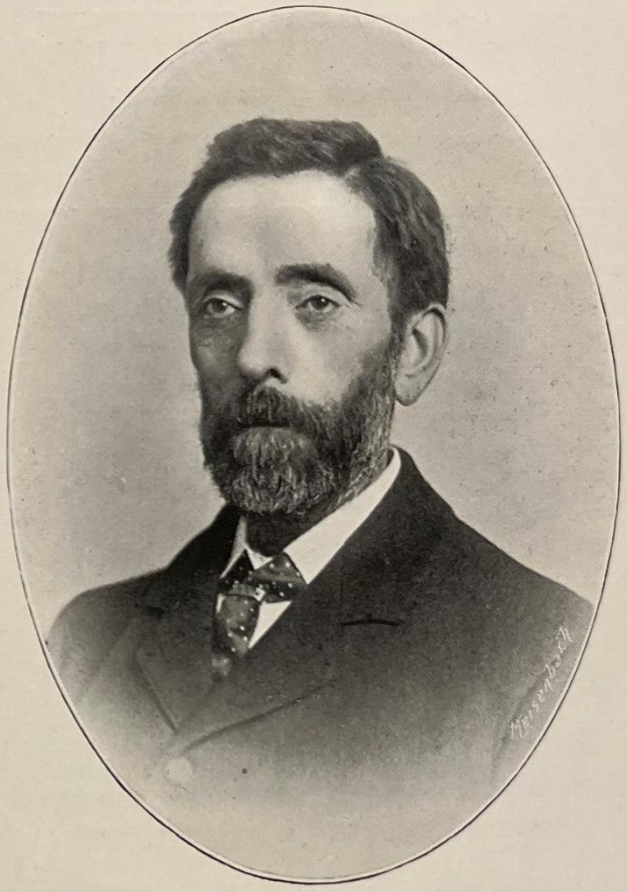
1882, it began to be discovered that the little hall in which the School was held was too small. Various expedients were resorted to in the attempt to remedy this difficulty, but without much success, until in the year 1892 it was decided to start a fund with a view to the enlargement of the building.



Mr. J. T. Cook.

What followed the acceptance of the ministry, and presidency of the School in 1897 by Mr. Brown, is within the knowledge of many. It may, however, be mentioned that while the new Hall was in course of erection the scholars temporarily met in the Chapel and in a neighbouring house lent by a friend. The new building was first used for school purposes on 21st October, 1900, when there were present 310 scholars and 33 teachers, while at

the present time the average attendance is about 450, and the number on the books over 600, with 54 teachers. In the year 1897 the Church and School sustained a severe loss by the death of Mr. William Roe Thomas, who was superintendent fifteen years. A tablet to his memory has been placed in Chatsworth Hall.



Mr. J. B. Crisp.

The Church has to thank God, not only for the great measure of spiritual blessing afforded, but also gratefully to record that He has greatly prospered its temporal affairs.

A sum of over £1,000 per annum is required to meet all the incidental expenses connected with the work of the Church and to keep the buildings in efficient repair.

This sum is raised by pew rents and weekly offerings, and has been ample to supply every need. In addition, the money required for the various Church agencies, Home and Foreign Missions, etc., has been liberally contributed, as the following Statement of Finance for the years 1897-1902 will prove :—

FINANCIAL STATEMENT,

Showing Income of each Agency.

Fund.	Amount. £	s.	d.	Treasurer.
Communion	555	7	1	Mr. Neale.
Sunday School	514	8	2	do.
Christian Endeavour Society	45	3	0	Mr. Foyster.
do. Missionary	151	10	2	Miss B. Austin.
Tract Society	20	1	6	Mrs. Cook.
Benevolent Fund	43	0	0	Mrs. Fox.
Dorcas Society	31	5	8	Mrs. A. Smith.
(*a*) Jewish Working Band ...	11	9	9	Miss Williams.
Mothers' Meetings	162	13	3	Mrs. Archibald Brown
Flower Mission...	41	18	11	Miss Fox.
Baptist Missionary Society ...	737	0	11	Mr. Aug. Smith.
Zenana Missions	274	5	3	Mrs. Burgess.
(*b*) Various Missions	713	1	2	
Total for the 6 years ...	£3,301	4	10	

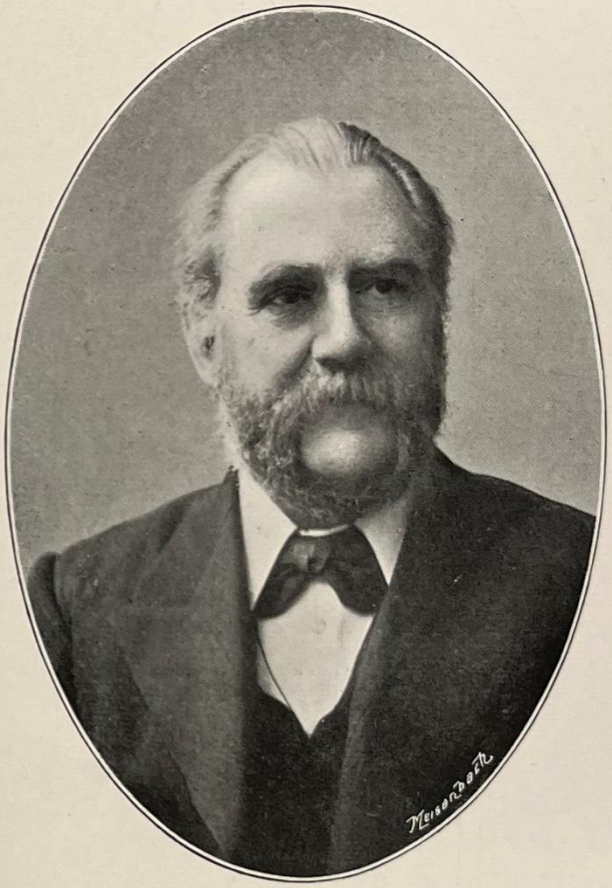
(*a*) Established 1900. (*b*) See following Notes.

The various Missions above mentioned include amongst others : — The China Inland, Irish Home, London City, Gipsy Tent, Pioneer, French Baptist, Congo Bololo, and Christian Police Mission ; Stockwell, East London, Brixton, Dr. Barnardo's, and other Orphanages ; British and Foreign Bible, Religious Tract, Indigent Blind, &c., Societies.

Various grants have also been made to other Churches, Colleges, &c., and a considerable amount spent in Convalescent Home and Surgical Aid letters.

Pastor A. G. Brown's 6th Anniversary.

IN connection with the Sixth Anniversary of Pastor Archibald G. Brown, some remarkable things have happened (says the "Norwood Press"). On Sunday evening, Nov. 1st, so great was the congregation, that all parts of the building were densely packed, even the preaching platform being invaded. Monday was Thankoffering

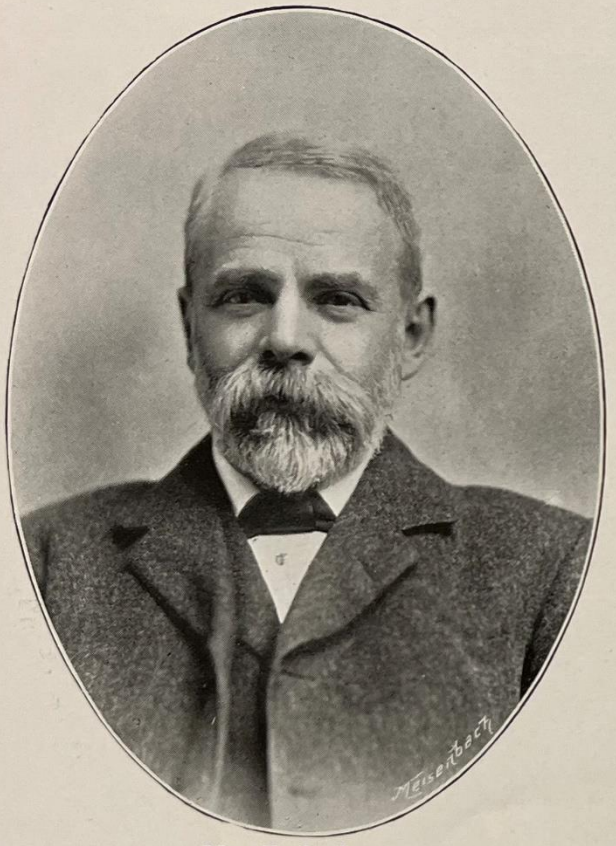


REV. WM. STOTT.

Day, and gifts, large and small, were brought in until some £264 was realized. Wednesday, Nov. 4, 1903, witnessed the Tea and Public Meeting, the latter one of the largest week-night gatherings yet held here. The Pastor presided in an informal manner, and the proceedings were of a very happy character.

Mr. T. A. CURTIS (Church Secretary) moved, and the Rev. W. STOTT seconded, both with a few appropriate remarks, the following resolution, which, on being put to the meeting, was carried with a hearty burst of applause:

"That this Church and Congregation desire to express their affectionate appreciation of the faithfulness and devotion of their Pastor's ministry during the past six years, and give

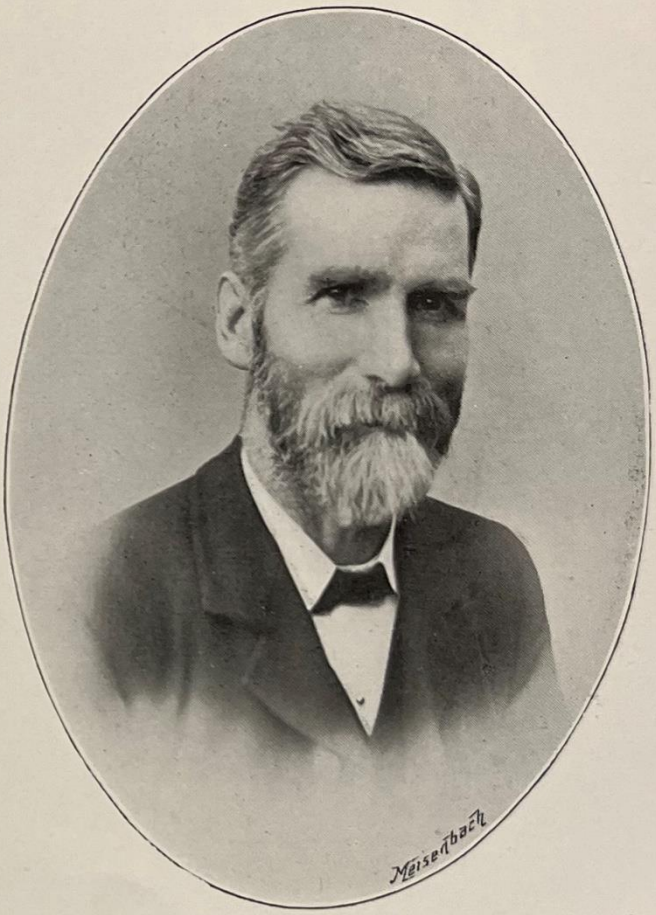


MR. E. S. JACOB.

God praise for the manifest blessing with which He has followed his earnest preaching of the Word. They rejoice in the fact that no debt now remains on the new Hall and Class-rooms, and feel that they owe a debt of gratitude to their Pastor for the part he has taken in the matter. They desire that the richest blessing of God may abundantly rest upon him and his wife and family, and make them a great blessing in years to come, and trust that grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ may ever rest upon them."

Mr. J. T. ANGER said that was a family gathering and a day of rejoicing for the gifts of God. On behalf of the Church and Congregation, the officers and teachers of the Sunday School, he asked the Pastor and his dear wife to accept their gifts with their love and devotion.

Mrs. STOTT, in presenting a fitted dressing-case each



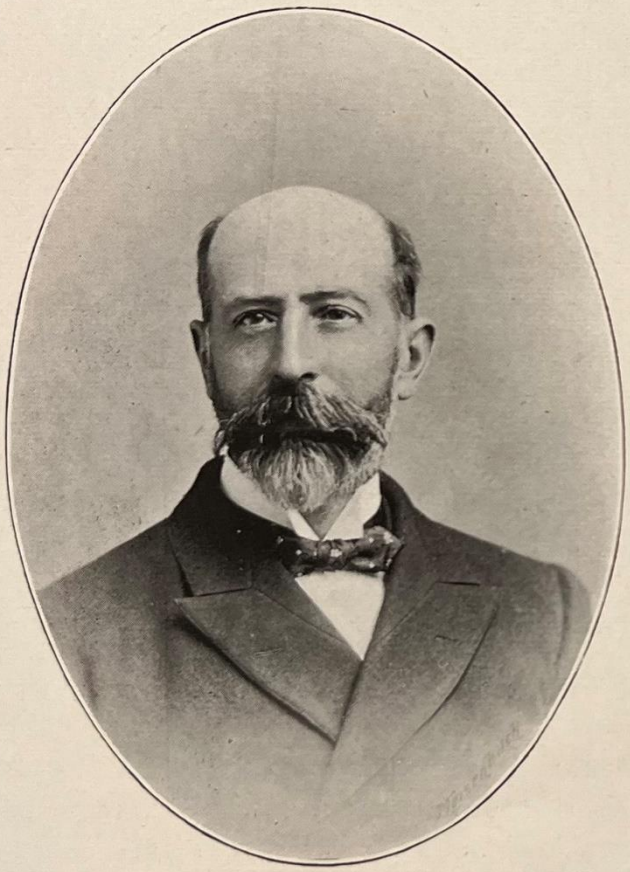
MR. J. ALDERTON.

to Mr. and Mrs. Brown, trusted they would long be spared to use them. (Applause.)

Mrs. BROWN, in expressing her thanks, asked if this meant that they were to be packed off bag and baggage. (Laughter.)

The PASTOR said he had not the faintest ghost of a

glimmering of what was going to take place, and he thought it was too good of them. Mr. Brown stated that 860 persons had been received into the Church during his ministry, a large number of whom had been gathered out of the world. The proceeds of the Thankoffering amounted to over £264, and he had been offered the gift of a freehold piece of land, with 65ft. frontage and a

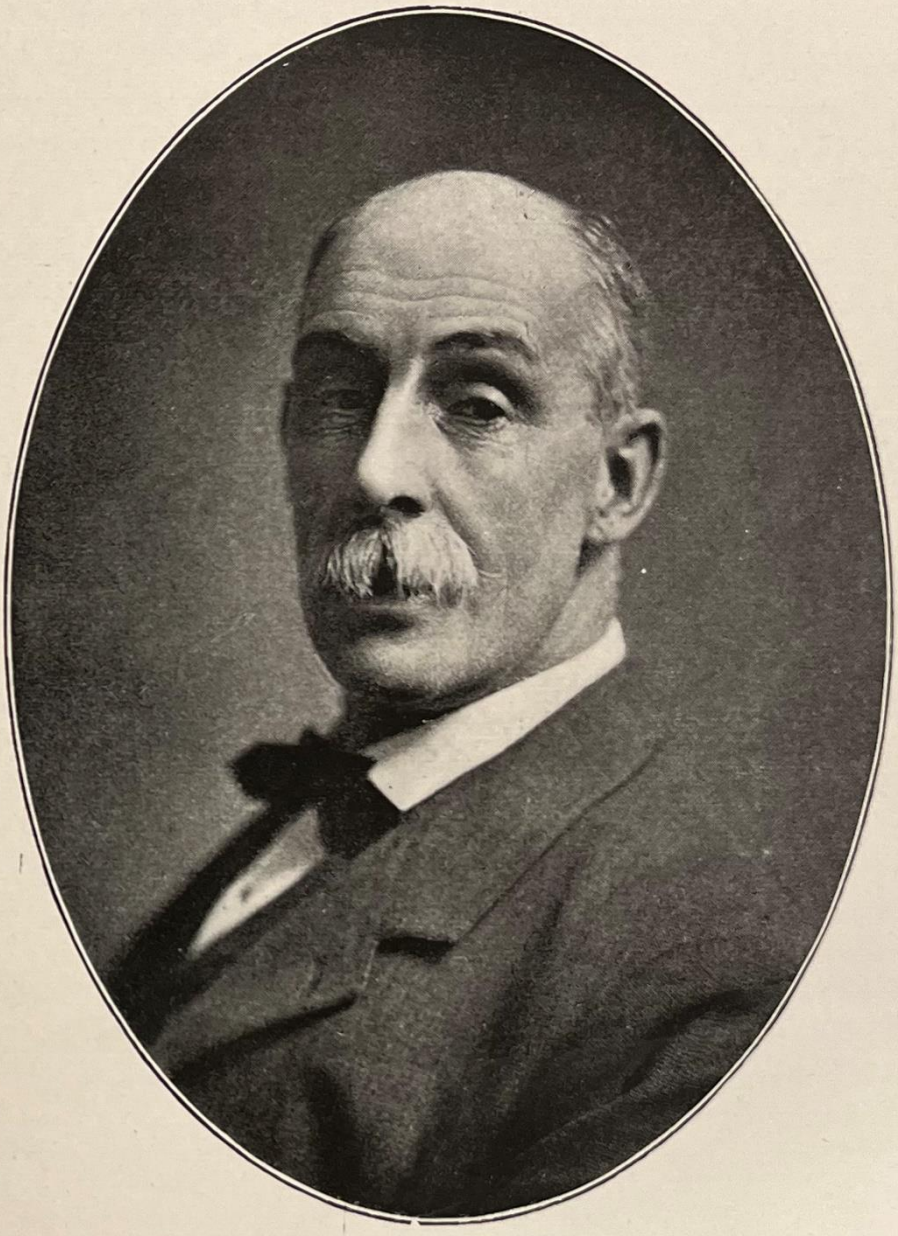


Mr. F. G. Gusterson.

depth of 200 feet, for a Seaside Home at a South-coast watering-place. He felt he could not accept it without being prepared to build a house on it. The land was worth £400. If anyone present liked to plank down £200 he would add £100; they could take £100 out of the Thankoffering: then he could go to outsiders for the

remainder, for they would want £800 at least. He left the matter with them.

Pastor FRANK WHITE said no one joined more



MR. JOHN PEARCE.

sympathetically and heartily in what had taken place that evening than he did. They had a beautiful church, a beautiful congregation, and everything else that was

beautiful. Then followed a peculiarly choice address on "Vessels to His honour," with a short exposition of 2 Tim. ii. 19, 20, 21.

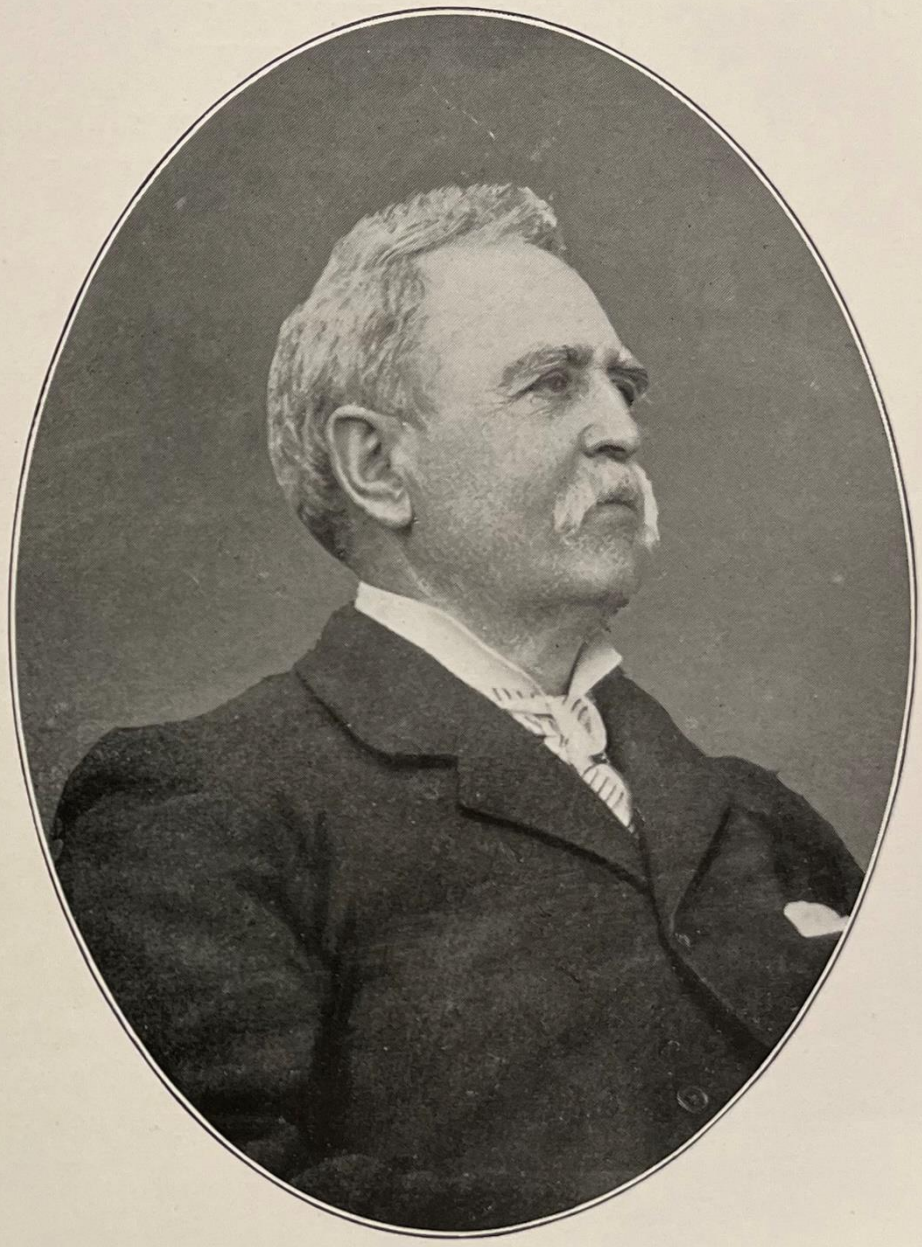
The presentation of an elaborately-illuminated and framed address to Mr. John Pearce, acknowledging his magnificent help in the erection of Chatsworth Hall, and rejoicing at the clearing of the debt, caused much embarrassment to the recipient and delight to the assembly.

Mr. PEARCE replied in a very few words, assuring the meeting that had he known what was going to take place he would not have been there. He related how his children had attended the school for a long time although he was associated with the Metropolitan Tabernacle: then when Mr. Brown came he and his family attended Chatsworth Road regularly, and, seeing the need of a new school, it had given him a great deal of joy to be able to help.

Pastor W. FULLER GOOCH expressed his hearty congratulation and brotherly sympathy with everything that had been done: and said there was not the slightest enmity between Lansdowne Hall and Chatsworth Road. That large gathering was but an answer to his prayer and earnest desire when he left Chatsworth Road that God's blessing might rest upon the Church. Mr. Gooch spoke in unmistakable terms of the necessity for them not to rest or count their victories: the battle lay in front, and they must press on. He also spoke of the need of keeping to the old truths in these days of doubt and higher criticism, when men attacked the Word of God.

The meeting closed with singing and prayer.

* * *



MR. DONALD CAMPBELL.

The following is a ——————

BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE VARIOUS AGENCIES OF THE CHURCH. . . .

The Christian Endeavour Society is a great help to young Christians, and interests itself in missionary work and in visiting the Home for Incurables.

Mothers' Meetings are held weekly. During the past five years the membership has increased tenfold.

The Tract Society does a useful work, and visitors have their various districts appointed in the neighbourhood for the constant delivery of tracts.

The Dorcas Society meets once a month, and as a result a large number of garments are made and distributed.

In connection with the *Benevolent Fund*, tickets, etc., are distributed by district visitors, and a good deal of relief is given in needy cases.

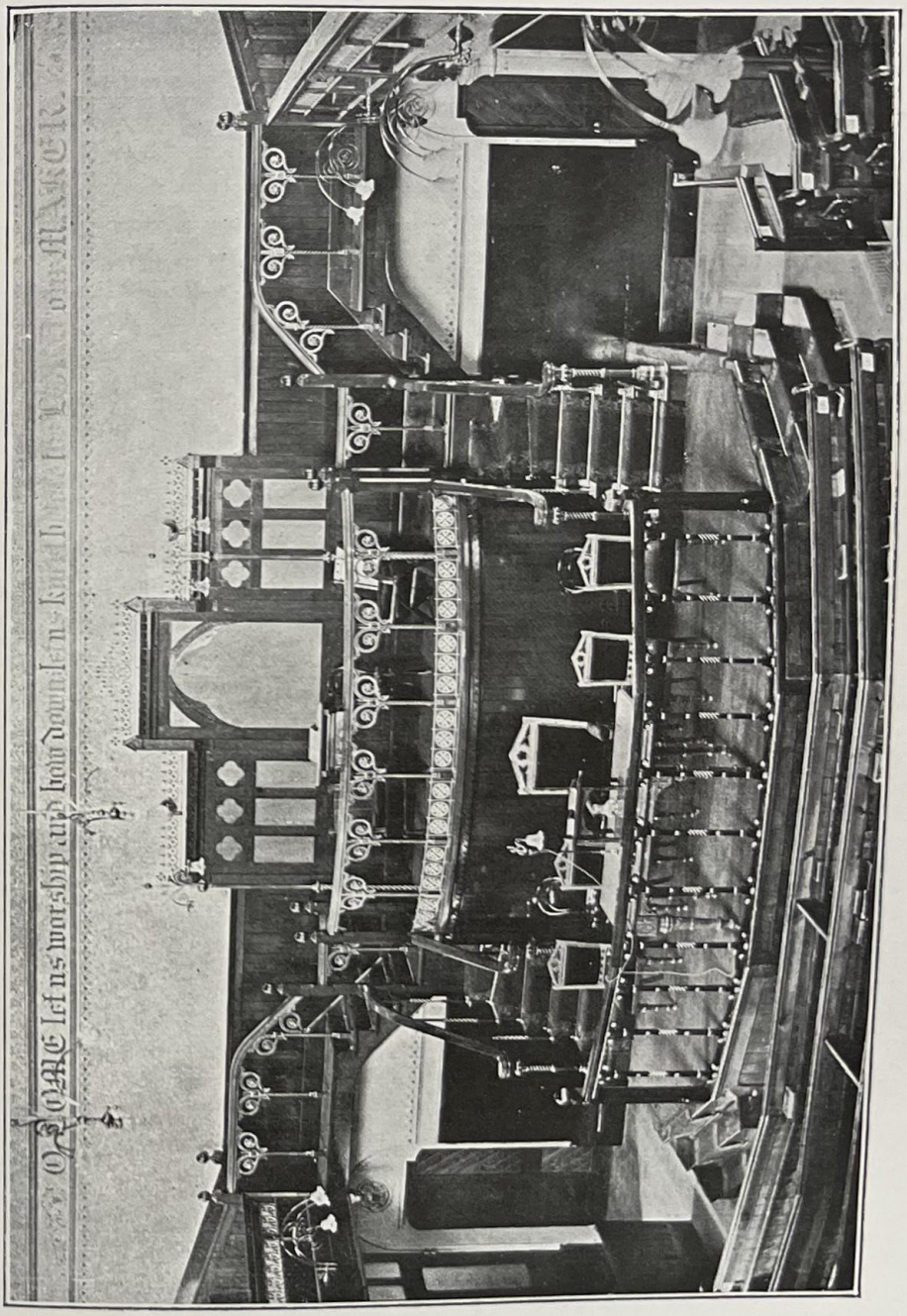
The Jewish Working Band holds its meetings once a month, and the garments which are made are distributed among Jewish children at Marnham Hall in East London.

Several ladies also visit the Dulwich Infirmary week by week. Their visits are greatly looked forward to by the inmates. At Christmas time toys, books, dolls, etc., are distributed to the children in the Infirmary.

Several of the young men carry on *Open-Air Services* during the summer months.

A considerable number of young people attend the *Band of Hope* and also the *Scripture Union Meetings*.

Mr. A. J. Ashley does a useful work for the Church by maintaining a stall for the sale of hymn books and literature.



THE ROSTRUM IN THE CHAPEL.

The Deacons and Elders.

FORMER DEACONS.

Name.	When First Elected.
James Joyce	Apr. 15, 1878
W. G. Thomas ...	„ „
F. W. Cartwright...	Jan. 31, 1881
E. A. Taylor... ...	„ „
J. W. Curtis	„ „
G. Shrewsbury ...	Dec. 20, 1882
F. Salter	„ „
J. J. Gait	Dec. 29, 1885
W. G. Elliott... ...	„ „
C. Bagster	Dec. 10, 1888
W. Tyrrell	„ „
G. F. Bessemer ...	„ „
W. Rivers	„ „
Wm. Roe Thomas...	Nov. 27, 1893

FORMER ELDERS.

Name.	When First Elected.
T. Burn Willoughby	Apr. 15, 1878
T. Spurrier	„ „
A. Seddon	Jan. 31, 1881
P. Garrioch	Dec. 20, 1882
A. J. Arnold... ...	June 30, 1885
W. G. Elliott ...	Nov. 30, 1891
A. S. Macdiarmid...	Jan. 16, 1901

PRESENT DEACONS.

Name.	When First Elected.
G. W. Neale... ...	Dec. 1, 1890
J. T. Anger	Nov. 27, 1893
R. Barber	Nov. 26, 1894
A. Smith	Dec. 30, 1895
P. Weare	Nov. 25, 1895
J. T. Cook	Nov. 28, 1898
J. B. Crisp	„ „
T. A. Curtis	Nov. 26, 1894

PRESENT ELDERS.

Name.	When First Elected.
J. Alderton	Jan. 16, 1901
F. G. Gusterson ...	„ „
E. S. Jacob	Oct. 22, 1902
Rev. Wm. Stott ...	Jan, 16, 1901

G. W. Neale became *Treasurer of the School*, Jan. 13, 1880, *and of the Church* 1892.
T. A. Curtis became *Secretary of the Church* Oct. 29, 1894.
J. T. Anger became *Superintendent of the School* Feb. 7, 1898.
J. B. Crisp became *Secretary of the School* Feb. 21, 1883.
E. S. Jacob became *Secretary to the Elders* Nov., 1902.
G. A. Grindley was appointed *Organist and Choirmaster* Oct., 1884.
W. G. Elliott was *Church Secretary* from June 23, 1886, to April 25, 1892.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson *(Chapel Keepers)* have held office for 25 years. Their address is 419, Norwood Road.

CHATSWORTH HALL.

VIEW FROM IDMISTON ROAD.

ENTRANCE FROM CHATSWORTH ROAD.

MEMORIAL STONES—(*See page 13*).

This Stone was Laid
by
MRS. ARCHIBALD G. BROWN,
Wife of
THE PASTOR.

This Stone was Laid
by
W. FULLER GOOCH,
First Pastor of the Church
From 1878 to 1892.

This Stone was Laid
by
MRS. G. W. NEALE,
ON BEHALF OF THE DEACONS,

J. T. Anger. J. T. Cook. A. Smith.
R. Barber. J. B. Crisp. P. Weare.
T. A. Curtis, Secretary.
G. W. Neale, Treasurer.

This Stone was Laid
by
MRS. JOHN PEARCE.
"Unto Him."

CHATSWORTH HALL.

THE LOWER HALL.

MEMORIAL STONES—*Continued.* (*See page 13.*)

THIS STONE WAS LAID
IN MEMORY OF
JOSEPH TRITTON
BY
HIS DAUGHTER.

THIS STONE WAS LAID
IN LOVING MEMORY OF THEIR PARENTS
BY
MIRIAM, OLIVE, AND ETHEL CLEMENTS.

THIS STONE WAS LAID
BY
MR. AND MRS. S. T. LANCASTER,
IN LOVING MEMORY OF THEIR DAUGHTER
BERTHA.

THIS STONE WAS LAID
BY
MRS. DONALD CAMPBELL.
TO
THE GLORY OF GOD.

TRUSLOVE & BRAY, PRINTERS, WEST NORWOOD, S.E.

Copies of this Booklet can be had on application to the Church Secretary,

Mr. Thomas A. Curtis,
48, Rosendale Road,
West Dulwich, S.E.